

## Message Text

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21

ACTION SCCT-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 /065 W

----- 015164

O R 271000Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8760

INFO USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

UNCLAS BEIRUT 1766

STATE PASS DEPARTMENTAL PRESS SPOKESMAN

EMO. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SPON LE

SUBJECT: BEIRUT PRESS ON GALLAGHER AND DYKES RELEASE

1. EMBASSY SPOKESMAN ISSUED FOLLOWING STATEMENT ON  
RELEASE OF GALLAGHER AND DYKES IN RESPONSE TO PRESS  
INQUIRIES EVENING OF JANUARY 25: QUOTE MR. CHARLES  
GALLAGHER AND MR. WILLIAM DYKES, DIRECTOR AND DEPTUY  
DIRECTOR OF THE U.S. INFORMATION AGENCY'S REGIONAL  
PRINTING PLANT IN BEIRUT, WERE RELEASED TODAY FOLLOWING  
FOUR MONTHS OF DETENTION BEGINNING WITH THEIR ABDUCTION  
ON THE WAY TO WORK ON OCTOBER 22, 1975. WE ARE  
GRATIFIED THAT MR. GALLAGHER AND MR. DYKES HAVE BEEN  
RELEASED IN GOOD HEALTH, AND WE ARE GRATEFUL TO ALL  
THOSE WHO ASSISTED IN OBTAINING THEIR RELEASE UNQUOTE.

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2. EMBASSY SPOKESMAN REFUSED TO BE DRAWN OUT ON IDENTITY  
OF THOSE WHO ABDUCTED AND DETAINED TWO USIA OFFICERS OR

ON WHO OR WHAT TRIGGERED THEIR RELEASE. HE DID STATE THAT QUOTE REPRESENTATIONS HAD BEEN MADE TO PRESIDENT FRANJIEH, PRIME MINISTER KARAME, AND OTHERS UNQUOTE AND DID NOTE THAT GALLAGHER AND DYKES WOULD BE REJOINING THEIR FAMILIES AND RETURNING TO THE U.S.

3. LOCAL PRESS GAVE STORY AMPLE COVERAGE, LARGELY ON BASIS SPOKESMAN'S REMARKS, BUT OFTEN INCLUDING SPECULATION ON IDENTITY OF ABDUCTORS. "AN-NAHAR" STATES TWO MEN WERE TURNED OVER BY QUOTE MEMBERS OF A PALESTINIAN ORGANIZATION UNQUOTE. "L'ORIENT-LE JOUR" STATE THEY WERE ABDUCTED BY LEFTIST LEBANESE MOVEMENT THAT THEN TURNED THEM OVER TO EXTREMIST PALESTINIAN ORGANIZATION. "AS-SAFIR" STATES THEY WERE TURNED OVER QUOTE THROUGH PFLP MEDIATION WITH ABDUCTORS UNQUOTE. "AL-HAYAT" WRITES QUOTE SEVERAL DAYS AGO, SURPRISE OCCURRED: IT WAS FOUND THAT TWO AMERICANS WERE WITH ONE OF REJECTION FRONTS AND THAT BROAD CONTACTS WERE MADE IN WHICH IT WAS AGREED TO TURN THEM OVER AT KAMAL JUMBLATT'S HOUSE.... AT APPOINTED TIME, THREE OFFICIALS OF PFLP ARRIVED WITH TWO AMERICANS UNQUOTE.

4. PAPERS ALSO SPECULATED ON POSSIBILITY OF RANSOM OR OTHER DEAL. "L'ORIENT-LE JOUR" NOTES THAT WIRE SERVICES CARRIED REPORTS THAT GALLAGHER AND DYKES MIGHT HAVE BEEN EXCHANGED FOR TWO PALESTINIAN COMMANDOS IN ISRAEL, BUT ALSO CARRIES EMBASSY SPOKESMAN'S DENIAL THAT ANY DEAL WAS MADE. "AL-ANWAR" PURSUES SAME SPECULATION, SAYING QUOTE INFORMED SOURCES SAID THAT PARTY DETAINING TWO AMERICANS HAD UNDERTAKEN INDIRECT CONTACTS WITH AMEMBASSY TO FREE TWO ARABS IN ISRAEL. IT APPEARS AMEMBASSY IN ISRAEL SUCCEEDED IN GETTING TEL AVIV AUTHORITIES TO FREE THE TWO ARABS UNQUOTE. THIS ALLEGATION ALSO APPEARS IN "ASH-SHA'B".

5. "BEIRUT" NEWSPAPER MAKES ANOTHER ALLEGATION: QUOTE IT WAS LEARNED THAT THEY HAD BEEN DETAINED BY AN ORGANIZATION THAT EXCHANGED THEM FOR WEAPONS THAT HAD BEEN UNCLASSIFIED UNCLASSIFIED

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SEIZED FROM SOME OF ITS MEMBERS SOME TIME BEFORE UNQUOTE.

6. IN ANSWER TO QUERIES BASED ON THIS PRESS SPECULATION, EMBASSY SPOKESMAN HAS REFUSED COMMENT ON POSSIBLE IDENTITY OF ABDUCTORS AND HAS DENIED THAT ANY RANSOM WAS PAID OR ANY DEAL MADE TO SECURE RELEASE OF OFFICERS. LAMBRAKIS

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, PRESS RELEASES, PRISONERS RELEASE  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 27 FEB 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Review Date:** 19 JUL 2004  
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**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
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**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** BEIRUT PRESS ON GALLAGHER AND DYKES RELEASE  
**TAGS:** SOPN, LE, US, (DYKES, WILLIAM R), (GALLAGHER, CHARLES D)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006